

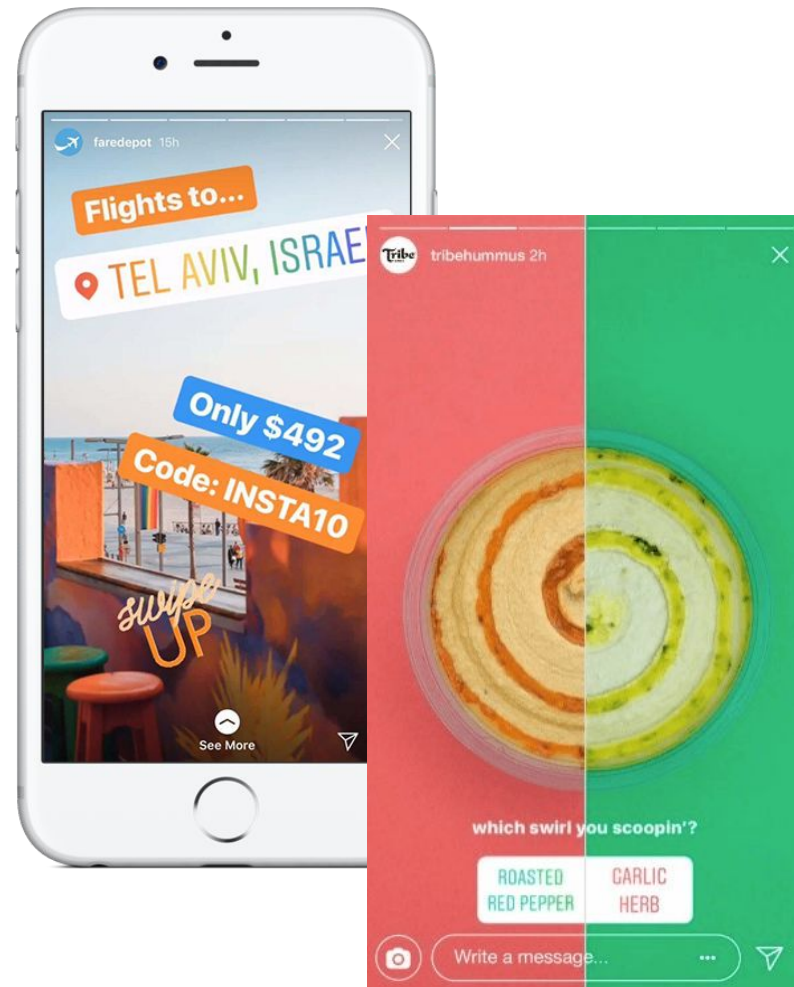
Instagram Stories

[Instagram Stories](#) have become increasingly popular over the years, and for good reason. They provide brands a creative outlet to interact with their followers and fans, with endless possibilities for customization.

 ***Did you know that businesses on Instagram get up to 37% of their total impressions from Instagram Stories?***

There are plenty of ways to take advantage of the feature, so be sure to test out some different methods.

We'll highlight some of the top ways brands are using Stories to drive traffic and increase ROI.



Use Polls and Ask Questions

Both the poll and question stickers offer great opportunity for follower interaction and engagement.

Get product feedback or opinions from customers, or have a fun Q&A session that makes your followers feel involved with your brand.

This type of authentic engagement is HUGE right now, and will create a sense of community among your brand 🙌



Create How-Tos and Guides

Show your followers a step-by-step guide or tutorial. This interactive type of slideshow will engage users and provide them value.

[@Etsy](#) shares DIY projects that are simple enough for their followers to replicate!

Encourage users to share with their audience, and soon enough your Story is in tons of people's DM's!



Share User-Generated Content

Repost users who tag your brand in their story, or encourage your followers to use a branded hashtag for the chance to be featured!

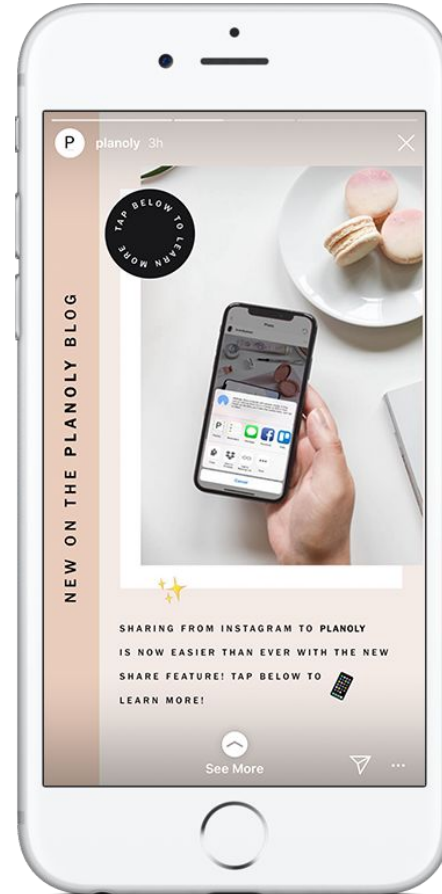
This will provide you with some great [user-generated content](#) to use, and also make your followers feel like they are involved with your brand.



Use Swipe-Up Feature

If you have over 10K followers, then you have access to use the [swipe-up feature](#) in your Stories, which is a hugely successful way to drive traffic to an external link.

Use the feature to link to a new blog post, or directly to a product that you're pushing. You can even throw in a special discount code to give people more of an incentive to swipe 🛍️ 🛍️



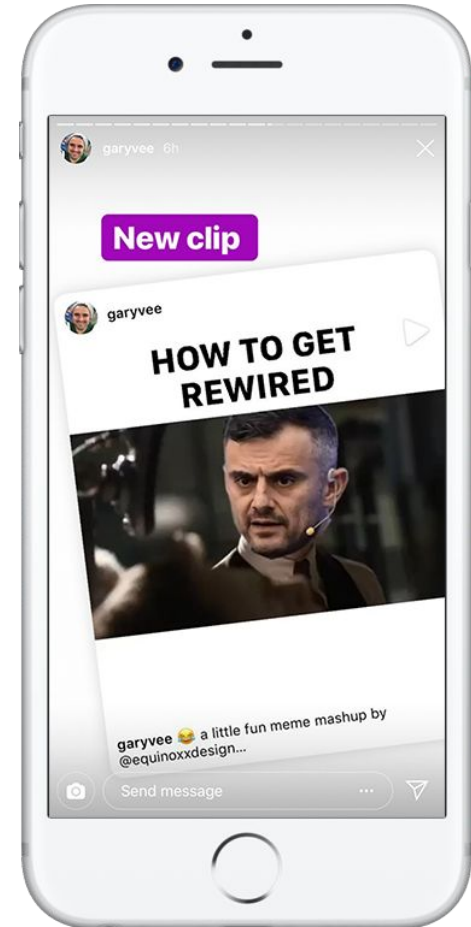
Repost Feature

Instagram allows you to repost content in your feed directly to your Story. This can be useful in a number of different ways!

One creative way to use the feature is to repost your **own** posts - like [@garyvee](#) does (he is a MUST FOLLOW on Instagram for learning IG marketing ideas!)

So if someone is watching your story, but missed your most recent post, this gives them the opportunity to go back and look.

You can also use this feature for fun, to share other brands' and influencers' posts that inspire you.

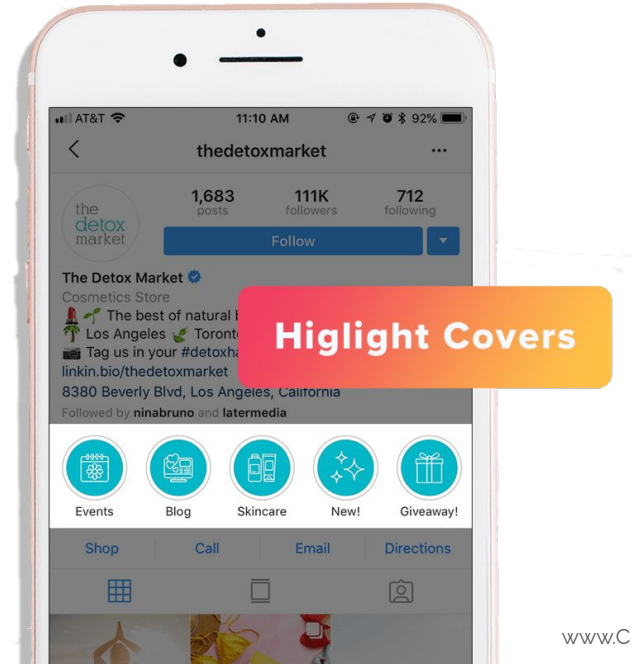


Use Story Highlights Feature

Lastly, one of the most effective uses for Instagram Stories is the Highlights feature.

For Stories that you want to keep on your page for longer than 24 hours, be sure to add them to your highlights. That way anyone who visits your page will be able to see your best stories showcased in your bio section.

You can get creative with a number of different categories of highlights: FAQ's, Meet the Team, New Products, Behind-the-Scenes ... the possibilities are endless!



Instagram Reels

Being on Instagram can sometimes feel like you're creating content for multiple platforms. After all, they have IGTV, Stories, Live and the feed, each of which takes a different type of content and new strategy. And now, most recently, they've added Instagram Reels. After rolling the feature out to countries like Brazil and Germany, the United States got access to Reels in August 2020, as a way for Facebook to compete with TikTok.

Instagram Reels vs. TikTok

Instagram Reels

Instagram Reels are short video clips, up to 15 seconds long, that you can use in your Stories, on your feed, add to IGTV or send as a DM. With Reels, you can adjust your video speed, add music or use existing audio clips. In practice, they're very similar to TikTok videos, although TikTok allows videos up to 60 seconds.



Instagram Reels

The large benefit to using Reels over TikTok, though, is that Instagram already has a large user base. You already have an audience there, your ideal customer is present, and you can just create new content for them. On TikTok, you'd be creating a brand new audience from scratch, and your ideal customers might not be on board yet.

As Reels become more popular, you're sure to find new advertising options through this feature on Instagram. It might take a little while for the advertising options to be offered, but it's easy to believe they'll be coming soon. Reels have also brought a new section on the Explore page: "Top Reels." If you can get one of your Reels featured there, you'll have the opportunity for some major brand exposure.

Instagram Reels

Before you run out and start creating Reels videos, think for a few moments about whether or not Reels are a good fit for your brand. TikTok's popularity comes from lip sync videos and performing pre-choreographed dances. It's not overly spontaneous (although you can create whatever Reels you want), and it's fun, quirky and a little goofy. If that vibe doesn't match your brand, you might want to pass on Reels - at least for right now. On the other hand, if that's the kind of image you want to portray, it's time to make your first Reel.



<https://about.instagram.com/blog/announcements/introducing-instagram-reels-announcement>

IGTV

IGTV is one of Instagram's sub-platforms. This is where you can upload long-form videos, anywhere from 60 seconds to 60 minutes (if you're on the computer - on your phone it can only be 15 minutes). **IGTV** has slowly become more popular over the past months, as the vertical videos fit well with the way people want to consume content on their phones.

IGTV has a number of benefits, primarily that your videos can be longer than 1 minute and that they won't disappear after 24 hours. You can also save your Instagram Lives to IGTV videos so they can last longer and impact more of your audience.

IGTV Monetization

Recently, Instagram has been exploring IGTV monetization, thus creating more of an incentive for influencers and brands to use the service. It's still not widely available, as Instagram is still testing and finalizing their strategy, but if it is rolled out to more users, it will allow influencers, brands and other IGTV content creators to make money off of the videos they create. It also means that brands will be able to advertise within IGTV to reach their target audience on other people's videos.

IGTV Content

If you like the idea of [IGTV content](#), you might not know exactly what kinds of videos to create or what topics to cover on the platform. In short, you can create a video about basically anything, although there are a few types of content that typically do better on IGTV.

- **Tutorials:** teach your audience something. This could be about your product or service, or it could simply be something relevant to your industry.
- **How-To:** show your audience how to use your product. Typically this takes longer than a minute, so IGTV is the perfect place to put this.
- **Getting to Know You:** your audience wants to know more about you because they want to know why they should buy from you. You can create videos like introductions or other personal-information type content for IGTV.
- **Behind-the-Scenes:** a day in the life of you or someone in your company can be a great use of an IGTV video. Or, show how you make one of your products. People love to get the “secret information,” so bring them behind the scenes.
- **Q&A:** these make great IGTV videos, especially if you crowdsource questions from your audience before you make the video. People will watch to see if you answer their question. (Bonus points if you reach out via DM to the people whose questions you answered to let them know you did so!)

IGTV

No matter what type of content you want to create for IGTV, it's time for you to test it out. Not everyone wants to watch IGTV videos, so make sure you're flexible and listening to your audience. If you get very few views on your first few videos, reach out to some of your followers and ask them what they'd prefer to see. Let them give you feedback.

